DH101

Introduction to Digital Humanities

University of California, Los Angeles | Fall 2014

Professor Miriam Posner: mposner@humnet.ucla.edu
Teaching Assistant Francesca Albrezzi: falbrezzi@ucla.edu
All classes (lecture and workshop) are in 2118 Rolfe
Office hours: by appointment at http://www.meetme.so/MiriamPosner, in Public Affairs 1070
Course site: miriamposner.com/dh101f14

Overview

What is digital humanities and how does it differ from other ways of studying the digital? We will investigate this question by examining the activities, platforms, tools, projects, and critical perspectives that form this emerging field and constitute its current core practices. We will also discuss historical underpinnings and traditions of knowledge production on which digital practices depend for their operation.

Our focus is on understanding thoroughly the basic components of a digital project — from data to interface — and on how the decisions we make at any point in a project affect the outcome. We will examine the difference between the world as we experience it and the world as the computer can capture it, and discuss how digital humanists think about and work through this disjunction.

The course will explore these conceptual issues as they relate to emerging forms of humanities scholarly production and digital methodologies, such as digital exhibits, digital mapping, text analysis, information visualization, and network analysis. Students will become familiar with various digital tools to explore these approaches to knowledge production in the weekly lab.

Learning Goals

To teach the basic vocabulary of concepts and tools in digital humanities and acquaint students with projects, critical work, resources in the field, and to provide a hands-on experience of building a digital scholarly project.

Requirements

Lecture and discussion/workshop sessions are tightly integrated; both are required. Students must be enrolled in both lecture and a lab.

Assessment

Project: 45%
Details of your final project and its assessment are provided in a separate handout.
Written work: 45%

25% Final: In class on December 10, cumulative.
20% Blog posts: Each week, you have a two-part blog assignment due:

1. A 400-word blog post (see below for details), due by classtime on Monday of each week.
2. Two substantive comments on classmates' blog posts, due by classtime on Wednesday

of each week.

Attendance: 10%

We do take attendance. You are permitted three absences (including lab absences), no questions asked. After that, each absence will result in a 10% deduction from your attendance grade.

Weekly blog post

You are required to post one 400-word weekly blog posts by classtime each Monday. Your posts should adhere to the following format:

- An image or link to a primary source (defined as a document that "provide[s] first-hand testimony or direct evidence concerning a topic under investigation") related to the readings for the week (either Monday's or Wednesday's reading).
- An explanation of what the source is and how it relates to the reading. Does it illuminate the phenomenon described in the reading, extend the argument of the reading, or challenge the argument? Why?

In addition to your blog post, you will post two substantive comments in response to your classmates' blog posts by classtime on Wednesday.

Together, each blog post and each week's comments account for 11% of your blog grade (which is 20% of your total grade for the class). Of this 11%, the blog post itself accounts for 8%; the comments account for 3%. We will not grade the blog posts or comments; you'll either receive full credit for having completed the requirements of each component each week, or none at all. You are welcome to use your own name or a pseudonym, as long as I know who you are. You should be aware that I've invited a number of the authors of the works we're reading to take a look at your blog posts and occasionally respond.

Key terms

In order to help you focus your reading and to serve as a mnemonic device, I have provided key terms for each week of class. Your final exam will consist of questions that ask you to relate these key terms to one another. Please note that the definition I will expect you to understand is not the dictionary definition of the term, but an elucidation of the term *as we have used it in the context of the class:* in our discussions, in our readings, and in our project work. You will be expected to cite relevant authors (though not exact quotes or page numbers) as well as class discussions.

In order to help you to share ideas on these terms, I have created a group Google doc, called "Key Terms," on which I invite you to gather your notes, thoughts, and links on each of these terms. This is your document, and you're welcome to use it as you wish.

Accessibility

In the spirit of Universal Design for Learning, I will strive to provide an environment that is equitable and conducive to achievement and learning for all students. I ask that we all be respectful of diverse opinions and of all class members, regardless of personal attribute. I encourage persons with disabilities or particular needs that impact on performance to meet with me to co-design accommodations, if necessary. I ask that we all use inclusive language in written and oral work. Students with disabilities may also want to register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (http://www.osd.ucla.edu).

A note on email

We enjoy working with you very much, and we strive to respond to emails within 48 hours. However, we regret that we cannot answer email after 5:00 p.m. or on weekends. Please plan accordingly. This

class has many moving parts, and from time to time, we'll need to get in touch with you. We'll expect you to check the email account associated with your MyUCLA profile each weekday. You may also wish to consult this guide to emailing a professor: https://cms.cerritos.edu/uploads/ifalcon/How_to_Email_your_Professor.pdf.

A Note on Collaboration

Working in groups is itself a skill, and the experience can at times be stressful. We encourage you to communicate with Professor Posner or Francesca if you need advice or intervention to assure a smooth experience of collaboration.

This syllabus is based on a course developed by Johanna Drucker with David Kim; see dh101.humanities.ucla.edu for prior versions of the course and past student projects.

READING AND LAB SCHEDULE

Readings are in CCLE unless they are accompanied by a hyperlink, in which case they're freely available online.

WEEK ONE: OVERVIEW

Key term: digital humanities, mediation, *episteme*, *techne*

1A: October 6

What is digital humanities? What is a digital humanities project?

1B: October 8

Examples, basic terms, and approaches. Special guest: Dr. Stuart Dunn, King's College London.

Required readings

- David Berry, "The Computational Turn: Thinking About the Digital Humanities," *Culture Machine* 12, (2011), http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/viewDownloadInterstitial/440/470.
- Rachel Deblinger, Memories/Motifs, http://memoriesmotifs.com/
- Stanford University Libraries, Kindred Britain, http://kindred.stanford.edu/
- Stephanie Evans and Moya Z. Bailey, Swag Diplomacy, http://viewshare.org/views/drevans/swag-diplomacy-black-travel-memoirs/

Lab one, October 10

What are the components of the digital final project? Project management.

WEEK TWO: SELECTING, CLASSIFYING, SORTING

Key terms: classification, archive, metadata, n-dimensional space, controlled vocabulary

2A: October 13

How do we decide which information is relevant to a topic and which we can ignore? How do we decide how to divide up this information? What are the implications of these decisions?

Required readings

- Gaffield, Julia. "Haiti's Declaration of Independence: Digging for Lost Documents in the Archives of the Atlantic World." *The Appendix* 2, no. 1 (January 2014). http://theappendix.net/issues/2014/1/haitis-declaration-of-independence-digging-for-lost-documents-in-the-archives-of-the-atlantic-world
- Chon Noriega, "Preservation Matters," *Aztlan* 30:1 (2005)
- C. Sperberg-McQueen, "Classification and its Structures," in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. Schreibman et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/
- University of Sydney, Digital Harlem: http://digitalharlem.org/

PROJECT MILESTONES

2B: October 15
What is metadata? Why do we use metadata standards?

Required reading
- Anne Gilliland, "Setting the Stage," from Murtha Baca, ed., *Introduction to Metadata* (Los Angeles: Getty, 2008): http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/intrometadata/setting.html
- National Information Standards Organization, "What is Metadata?" (Bethesda, MD: NISO Press, 2004): http://www.niso.org/publications/press/UnderstandingMetadata.pdf

Lab two, October 17: DEADLINE TO DROP CLASS
Divide into groups, brainstorm topics, buy server space, install Omeka.

October 17, in lab
Form groups
Purchase server space
Install Omeka

WEEK THREE: CLASSIFICATION, CONTINUED; RESEARCH TECHNIQUES
Key terms: ontology, local knowledge

3A: October 20
What are the ideological effects of various systems of classification?

October 20, in class
Submit group's research topic via CCLE

Required reading
- Wallack, Jessica Seddon, and Ramesh Srinivasan. "Local-Global: Reconciling Mismatched Ontologies in Development Information Systems." 42nd Hawaii International Conference onSystem Sciences, 2009. http://rameshsrinivasan.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/18-WallackSrinivasanHICSS.pdf.
- Selections from Bowker and Star, *Sorting Things Out* (Cambridge, Ma: MIT, 1999).
- Madrigal, Alexis C. "How Netflix Reverse Engineered Hollywood." *The Atlantic*, January 2, 2014. http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/01/how-netflix-reverse-engineered-hollywood/282679/.
- Washington State University, Plateau Peoples' Web Portal: http://plateauportal.wsulibs.wsu.edu/html/ppp/index.php.

3B: October 22 | Lecture by Dr. Zoe Borovsky
Advanced research techniques.

Required reading
- UC Libraries Research Tutorial: http://www.lib.uci.edu/uc-research-tutorial/begin.html

Lab three, October 24
Tour of Omeka, discussion of group roles, discussion of one-pager and group charter.

WEEK FOUR: FROM DATA TO DATABASE

Key terms: database, relational database, data visualization

4A: October 27

Database fundamentals

Required readings:

- Stephen Ramsay, "Databases," in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. Schreibman et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/
- David M Kroenke and David J Auer, *Database Concepts* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008), chapters one and two.
- Emory University, Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces

4B: October 29

Databases, continued; introduction to data visualization

Required readings:

- Michael Christie, "Computer Databases and Aboriginal Knowledge"
- *Data + Design: A Simple Introduction to Preparing and Visualizing Information* (https://infoactive.co/data-design)
- Selections from Isabel Meirelles, *Design for Information* (Rockport, 2013)
- Micki Kaufman, Quantifying Kissinger: http://blog.quantifyingkissinger.com/.

Lab four, October 31

Data visualization techniques

October 31, by lab
Project one-pager and charter, submitted via CCLE

WEEK FIVE: INFORMATION VISUALIZATION, CONT.; TEXT ANALYSIS

Key terms: data, capta, parameterization, unstructured data

5A: November 3

Historicizing and theorizing data visualization

Required reading

- Johanna Drucker, "Humanities Approaches to Graphical Display," *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (2011). http://digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/5/1/000091/000091.html.
- Lauren Klein, "The Image of Absence: Archival Silence, Data Visualization, and James Hemings." *American Literature* 85, no. 4 (December 1, 2013): 661–88.
- Tim Sherratt, The Real Face of White Australia, http://invisibleaustralians.org/faces/

5B: November 5
Introduction to text analysis

Required reading
- William Turkel, Data Mining with Criminal Intent http://criminalintent.org/getting-started/
- Commentary by Andrew Smith: http://andrewdsmith.wordpress.com/2011/08/21/the-promise-of-digital-humanities/
- Emory University, Lincoln Logarithms: http://disc.library.emory.edu/lincoln/

Lab five, November 7
Text analysis techniques

Friday, November 7, by lab
Annotated bibliography of 30 sources on your topic, submitted via CCLE.

WEEK SIX: NETWORK ANALYSIS
Key terms: network graph, edge, node, bimodal network

6A: November 10 | In-class project work and check-in

6B: November 12 | Lecture by Dr. David Shepard
Network analysis

Required reading:
- Scott Weingart, “Demystifying Networks” http://www.scottbot.net/HIAL/?p=6279
- Kieran Healy, Using Metadata to Find Paul Revere: http://kieranhealy.org/blog/archives/2013/06/09/using-metadata-to-find-paul-revere/

Lab six, November 14
Project check-in

Friday, November 14, by lab
Metadata standards document due, with one-page rationale

WEEK SEVEN: WORKING THROUGH SPACE
Key terms: GIS, Cartesian coordinates, Mercator projection

7A: November 17 | Lecture by Yoh Kawano
Introduction to GIS

Required reading
- Stuart Dunn, “Space as Artefact,”
- Michael Goodchild, “What Does Google Earth Mean for the Social Sciences?”

7B: November 19
What cultural and political values are embedded in the way we model space?

Required reading
- Ian Gregory, “Using Geographical Information Systems to Explore Space

and Time in the Humanities”
- Sara McLafferty, “Women and GIS: Geosptial Technologies and Feminist Geographies”

Lab seven, November 21
Working with time and space.

Friday, November 21, by lab
Tools selected for map, timeline, and data visualization, with one-paragraph description of rationale for each

WEEK EIGHT: INTERFACES
Key terms: interface, materiality

8A: November 24
Interfaces and user experience.

Required reading
- Kirschenbaum, Matthew G. “‘So the Colors Cover the Wires’: Interface, Aesthetics, and Usability,” in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, edited by Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth, 523–42. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004): http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/.
- Jesse James Garrett, Elements of User Experience, http://www.slideshare.net/openjournalism/elements-of-user-experience-by-jesse-james-garrett
- Ben Shneiderman, Eight Golden Rules, http://faculty.washington.edu/jtenenbg/courses/360/f04/sessions/schneidermanGoldenRules.html
- Catherine Plaisant and Ben Schneiderman. *Designing the User Interface: Strategies for Effective Human-Computer Interaction (*Boston: Pearson Higher Education), 2004, chapter 14.
- Evan Bissell and Eric Loyer, The Knotted Line: http://knottedline.com/
- Evan Bissell and Eric Loyer, Freedom’s Ring: http://freedoms-ring.org/?view=Speech

8B: November 26
No class

NO LAB

WEEK NINE: 3D MODELING
Key terms: process-based question, product-based question, immersion, theory, praxis

9A: December 1 | Lecture by Dr. Lisa Snyder
3D modeling and cross-cultural interfaces.

Required reading
- Lisa Snyder and Scott Friedman. “Software Interface for Real-Time Exploration and Educational Use of Three-Dimensional Computer Models of Historic Urban Environments.” National Endowment for the Humani-

ties, September 16, 2013.
- Diane Favro, “Meaning in Motion. A Personal Walk Through Historical Simulation Modeling at UCLA,” in: Visualizing Statues in the Late Antique Forum (http://inscriptions.etc.ucla.edu/index.php/statues-and-memory/methodological-essays/).

9B: December 3
Where does theory fit into the digital humanities, and where does praxis fit in? How do we think about the way the two fit together? Wait, what is theory anyway?

Required reading
- Johanna Drucker, “Theory as Praxis: The Poetics of Electronic Textuality.” *Modernism/modernity* 9, no. 4 (2002): 683–91.
- Natalia Cecire, “Introduction: Theory and the Virtues of Digital Humanities.” *Journal of Digital Humanities*, March 9, 2012. http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-1/introduction-theory-and-the-virtues-of-digital-humanities-by-natalia-cecire/.

Lab nine, December 5
Design meetings, project documentation.

WEEK TEN: TYING THINGS UP

10A: December 8
Review session and project workday

Monday, December 8, by class-time
Wireframe mock-up of project submitted as PDF via CCLE

10B: December 10
Final exam in class

Lab ten, December 12
Finish final projects, prepare for final presentation

Friday, December 19, 11:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
Presentations of final projects

Friday, December 19, by 11:30 a.m.
All project work complete, including documentation.